

In the Footsteps of the Buddha -A Pilgrimage Retreat through India

Led by Brother Phap Huu and other monastics from Plum Village and Dharmacharya Shantum Seth

Peepal* Pilgrimage Saturday January 31 to Friday February 13, 2026

Optional Extensions:

Building Love - Agra (Taj Mahal and Agra Fort) February 13-14, 2026 (ending in Delhi)

The Exquisite Caves– Ajanta & Ellora February 14-February 17, 2026 (beginning and ending in Delhi)

**Peepal (Ficus religiosa) is the species of tree under which the Buddha awakened in Bodh Gaya*

This 14-day journey begins in the vibrant capital of India, Delhi, where ancient history meets modern charm and sacred sites offer a meaningful gateway to our spiritual journey.

Arrival day is Saturday, January 31, 2026. Your hotel room will be available for check-in after 2.00 pm.

IMPORTANT TRAVEL INFORMATION

TRAVEL INSURANCE

We strongly recommend that all registrants purchase comprehensive travel insurance. Coverage can vary significantly between policies, so choose one that suits your needs. Consider including protection for travel delays, trip cancellation or interruption, medical expenses, and loss or delay of baggage. Before purchasing, check with your health insurance provider to see if your policy offers overseas medical coverage.

ARRIVAL

- All travel arrangements to and from New Delhi (DEL), India, are the responsibility of participants.
 - It is best to book international flights as early as possible, as prices tend to increase closer to the travel date.
 - Most international flights arrive in the late-night or early-morning hours. We can assist with flights—please check with us before finalizing your bookings.
 - We offer a **complimentary airport transfer** upon your arrival in New Delhi.
 - Hotel check-in on **Saturday, January 31, 2026**. Your room will be available after **2:00 pm**. Orientation will take place on the **morning of Sunday, February 1**.
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DEPARTURE

- A complimentary airport transfer is also provided for your departure.
 - Your flight from **Lucknow to Delhi** arrives at approximately **12:00 pm (noon)** on **Friday, February 13, 2026**. We recommend booking international flights **departing after 8:00 pm** on February 13.
 - For those joining the **Agra extension**, you will return to Delhi on the evening of **Saturday, February 14, 2026**. Plan to book a **late-evening** departure on **February 14** or an **early morning** flight on **February 15**.
 - If you are taking the **Ajanta & Ellora extension**, your journey ends **on the evening of Tuesday, February 17, 2026**. You should book your departure for the **night of February 17 (after 1:00 am on February 18)**.
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EXTRA NIGHTS

For those who wish to arrive early to adjust to the time zone or stay longer after the pilgrimage ends, we can assist with additional nights in New Delhi. Please request these arrangements well in advance. If you plan to take extra excursions within India or elsewhere in Asia, we would be happy to help coordinate them.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR THIS TRIP

- You must have a valid passport—its expiry date should be at least six months beyond your date of entry into India—and an Indian visa.
- Obtain your visa before traveling. We recommend applying for a **multiple-entry tourist visa**, as it allows you to apply well in advance of the journey. A **single-entry visa** can only be applied for up to 30 days before your departure. Please ensure your visa covers the full duration of your travel.

If you are a journalist, writer, photographer, or work in any media-related profession, please inform us before applying for your visa, as special requirements may apply.

An **Electronic Travel Authorization (ETA)**—also known as an **e-Tourist Visa on Arrival (eTVA)**—is available to citizens of 165 countries.

The Link for the official website is below (must be applied for before travel to India)

<https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/evisa/tvoa.html>.

Home Page

<https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/>

You may need to submit the following information about the tour company:

- **Company Name:** White Clouds Journeys Pvt. Ltd. (Government-approved tour operator)
- **Registered Address:** 50/8, First Floor, Tolstoy Lane, Janpath, New Delhi 110001, India
- **Tel:** +91-120-4334284
- **Email:** info@buddhapath.com

The first hotel in the itinerary is:

Holiday Inn Mayur Vihar Delhi

District Centre, 13A, Mayur Place, Mayur Vihar, New Delhi, Delhi, 110091

Tel: [+91-11 4110 5555](tel:+911141105555)

IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO BE SUBMITTED

- Each participant must submit a clear scan of their passport showing the following details to reserve flights and hotels: full name, gender, date of birth, passport number, date of issue, date of expiry, place of issue, and emergency contact information.
- Once your Indian visa is issued, please also submit a scan showing the visa number, date of issue, date of expiry, and place of issue. It is helpful to include the visa page and the passport photograph page.

CURRENCY EXCHANGE, CREDIT CARD USE AND TIPPING

- The tour fee covers hotels, meals, transport in India/Nepal, and guide services. However, travelers should carry cash for extras like souvenirs. If you extend your stay before or after the pilgrimage, you will need additional funds.
- Credit cards (Visa, American Express) are accepted at some hotels and larger shops in Delhi or Varanasi but might not be accepted in smaller towns.
- ATM machines are available but not available everywhere.
- As of June 2025, 1 US Dollar ≈ 84 INR (Indian Rupees). We recommend exchanging some cash at the Delhi airport, where rates are reliable before and after customs.

Tipping Guidelines

- We collect an optional “tip kitty” at the start; that will be distributed to drivers, guides, staff, porters, hotel staff, etc. Over the years, this has worked well. Estimated amount: 200 USD per person for the entire trip.
 - If you arrive before the start of the pilgrimage or stay after it concludes, the general rule is as follows: tipping someone who has carried your luggage is common and we would suggest INR.100. In restaurants, one normally leaves a tip of 5% to 7% of the entire bill, unless a service charge has already been levied. If you have hired a car for the day and you are happy with the driver, a tip of INR 1000 is fine.
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HOTELS

- We choose hotels in the vicinity of the sites. Accommodations are typically twin-share rooms with private bathrooms, ranging from 3-star plus to 5-star. Single rooms are available for an additional charge. All stays are clean, comfortable, and among the best available in each area.
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ELECTRICITY

- India operates on 220–240 V, 50 Hz AC. Sockets require round-pin plugs. Please bring a universal adapter with round prongs.
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WEATHER AND CLOTHING ADVICE

- Temperatures can range from 10 °C to 30 °C (50–85 °F). Layering is recommended.
 - Bring a jacket or light sweater, and optionally a shawl for meditation. Pack cotton shirts and trousers; no formal attire needed.
 - Conditions are mostly dry but occasional light rain or fog may occur. An umbrella that doubles as a sunshade and walking aid is useful.
 - Comfortable sneakers or sandals (to wear with socks if needed) are ideal. Temples require shoe removal—socks are recommended. A hat or cap is advised for sun protection.
 - Luggage limits on domestic flights: 15 kg (33 lbs) checked, 7 kg (15 lbs) cabin. Extra baggage incurs additional charges.
 - Laundry is available at all accommodations and is typically returned within 24 hours.
 - If you use a cushion or folding camp stool for meditation, please do bring it. We shall provide you a mat.
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HEALTH CONCERNS

We stay in clean, safe accommodations, and meals are freshly prepared to suit sensitive digestion. Bottled mineral water is provided for drinking.

If you are arriving from Africa or certain parts of Latin America, a valid yellow fever vaccination certificate is required by Indian authorities. No other vaccinations are mandatory for entry into India, but we recommend ensuring your tetanus immunization is current. For additional precautions, please consult your physician. While we carry a first-aid kit, many travelers prefer to bring their own medications.

SIM CARDS & MOBILE SERVICE

It is quite easy and inexpensive to get a local SIM card for your mobile phone at Indira Gandhi International Airport (Delhi). **It is very difficult to get one outside of the airport.** As you leave the customs area, there is a mobile phone booth. You need to show your passport and visa to buy an Indian SIM card with data. If you have a ‘locked’ phone, you may need to ‘unlock’ it before you come to India. Mobile telephony in India is inexpensive. You can ask the person who comes to meet you at the airport from Buddha Path to help you.

Some people prefer getting international plans that work for India or even an eSIM option. Many travelers find eSIMs quick and simple, especially for data-only use. For full functionality (calls/SMS), get a physical SIM at airport or after arrival. For data only and fast setup, consider a pre-purchased eSIM.

ADDITIONAL TRAVEL SERVICES (e.g., taxis)

We provide airport transfers both ways and all transport services during the pilgrimage, including meeting you upon arrival in New Delhi—at no extra charge.

For those who prefer to arrange their own transport, DEL Airport offers prepaid taxis available outside the arrivals area. App-based cabs (Uber, Ola) are also accessible, but using them may require walking to the designated ride-share pickup areas in the multi-level parking.
